Please amend the application as follows:

In the Specification

On page 1, please amend the Related Applications section as follows:

--This application is a continuation of U.S. Application No. 09/545,337, filed, April 7, 2000, which is incorporated herein by reference. --

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 2-4, 6-11 without prejudice.

Please amend claim 1 and 5 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A system for distributing information to a set of destination nodes connected via a communication network comprising:

a reporting process in each destination node for generating and transmitting a report to a distribution manager, said report containing an identification of said destination node and corresponding destination node parameters, whereby said destination node offers to become a participant in a distribution job;

said distribution manager connected to said network and configured to receive said reports from said destination nodes and to create a prioritized list of destination nodes selected as participants in a distribution job according to said destination node parameters, said prioritized list ~~adapted to represent a transmission tree structure in which each destination node on said prioritized list becomes~~ being an information source for any later destination node occurring ~~later~~ in said list, said distribution manager having a management process for sending information to each participant;

said management process adapted to send each participant instructions to obtain a copy of said information either from said distribution manager or from another identified participant, and

said management process determines when each participant has received a copy of said information;

each participant having a store-and-forward process configured to receive instructions from a prior participant or from said distribution manager and to request a copy of said information from said prior participant or from said distribution manager, and to thereafter request further distribution instructions from said distribution manager until instructed that no other participants require said information;

whereby each participant obtains a copy of the information and the distribution manager obtains confirmation that each destination node has obtained said information.

5. (Currently Amended) A method of distributing information to a set of servers connected via a communication network comprising the steps of:

obtaining a list of servers desiring to participate in a distribution;

prioritizing said list according to parameters associated with each server;

issuing instructions to each server in the listed order, said instructions including the identification of a source for obtaining said information and an identification of the next server on the list;

distributing said information according to said instructions; and

notifying each server when the prioritized list is exhausted ~~The method of claim 3~~ in which said steps of issuing instructions and distributing said information further comprise the steps of:

(A) obtaining an address of a first server address on said list, ~~said list residing on a distribution server~~;

(B) sending a notification message ~~to said first server, said notification~~ containing the address of a second server having an information file to distribute;

(C) ~~receiving said message at said first server and~~ requesting a copy of said information from said second server;

~~(D) sending a report to said distribution server when said second server has successfully received said copy of said information;~~

~~(E) responding to said report by repeating steps (A) through (D) until said list is exhausted;~~

whereby said copy of said information is sent to each server on said list in an order determined according to the order of the list and the transmission time in the network.

Please insert new claim 12.

12. (New) A method for determining the completion status of processing by individual nodes of a group of destination nodes on a multicast data channel, said group having a group leader, comprising the steps of:

notifying an assignment processor in at least one of said destination nodes that an assignment has been received for processing;

determining completion status of said processing by at least one of said destination nodes;

notifying said group leader of said completion status by a message from said at least one destination node such that the group leader acquires a collective indication of status from nodes within said group;

transmitting a multicast request from said group leader (GL) to nodes in said group; and transmitting a request to each non-reporting node.